

## GO AND TELL THE NOMINAL BELIEVERS

(Isa. 6:8,9)

In many a Church, the membership grows on the emotional charge received from hearing a good choir, or seeing an imposing building, or listening to an eloquent pastor with pleasant chairside manner. The Church of God's called out ones grows on received and applied teaching of Truth, only that. Probably every Church assembly, at least once, must experience and evaluate the respective importance of cultivated joy in sound teaching and the usually more externally manifested joy from social participation with others. Typically, the Church membership develops on the joy of social contact and good works. Christians should certainly do good works, but doing good works makes no one a Christian. Good works easily become an idol substitution for seeking and following Truth. The holy Church develops itself on the enjoyment of the benefits derived from the possession of sound teaching. Some of you can identify with the need for thoughtful choosing in your own experience.

Our Bible repeatedly confirms the advantage of learning to rejoice in all things - even sound teaching. It is difficult to know which comes first, the joy or the teaching, but actually some joy has to precede good teaching, if it is to be assimilated, and sound teaching has to precede joy, in order for there to be the experience of joy from the teaching. However, the level of joy sometimes also termed love, can never be the measure of Church progress. Joy can also come from what appears to be success in evil.

Concerning Ephraim, a type of Christendom, the Lord has said the priest and the prophet are filled with confusion (Isa. 28:7). Therefore, so are their followers. The statement is prophetic - particularly of our generation, as is also related in the Book of Revelation (Rev. 2:20, 3:17). We can't at all help that we all start out in confusion, but we can help by not staying there. All teaching THOUGHT TO BE GOOD BY MANY IS NOT ALWAYS sound teaching. If it has an early appeal to large numbers, there is a chance

there is something very wrong mixed into a minimum of truth. The historical pattern continuing through the most of the Tribulation is that of the majority not seeing and not hearing. Every revival has been to bring about change. Every revival has featured different teachings from critical lips. That is the prophetic word of Isa. 28:11. He also foretold of scoffers being bound even more strongly in confusion. Few contemporary "Isaiahs" will be perfect in all they offer, but be diligent to give ear to hear what the Spirit is saying to the Churches, through them. And take care through preparation that the teaching you offer is as sound as it should be.

"Go and tell this people", the nominal believers close by (Isa. 6:9). It was the same in Ezek. chapter 3. "You are not sent to foreigners", but to those close by. It used to be the congregation's first thought in evangelism to send a missionary to another country. Today, evangelism typically also includes a more local distribution of tracts, printed and verbal. There have to be some changes during the Tribulation period. There is a Bible pattern for responsibility and priorities.

First is the seeking of truth for self, to be qualified. Then there is the offering of truth to the family, to show good examples. Then there is the teaching of truth to the Church assembly, to prove worth. Then there is the introduction of truth locally to interested people still outside the Church to build value. Then the city may be influenced by truth; then the State; and then the nation. Finally, the truth is to be taken to foreign lands. Teaching is to motivate individuals into dedication in the search for truth and the possession of all righteousness. A minimum of preparation and dedication should be reached in each level before embarking on the next. By now most of you should be adequately ready to take on the next level for you. Son of man, you receive all the Lord's words into your heart and be sure you have really heard them with your ears. Then go out to the youths still captive to confused truth among the nominal believers and the potential believers. Tell them what they need to hear, whether they will hear or refuse to hear (Ezek. 3:1-11).

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